

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-06 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01

INR-05 L-01 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 SAM-01 /061 W
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R 011247Z NOV 74

FM AMEMBASSY MADRID

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 345

INFO AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

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TAGS: PINT, SP

SUBJECT: REACTION TO CABINET CHANGE

REF MADRID 6829

1. REMOVAL OF PIO CABANILLAS FROM MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND TOURISM HAS PROMPTED WIDE-RANGING COMMENT IN SPANISH MEDIA. ALL COMMENTATORS HAVE PAID TRIBUTE TO HIS STEWARDSHIP NOTING HIGH DEGREE OF EFFECTIVE COLLABORATION BETWEEN MEDIA AND MINISTRY DURING HIS TENURE. SOME COMMENTATORS HAVE EXPRESSED ASTONISHMENT THAT MAN WHO WAS RESPONSIBLE UNDER FORMER MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND TOURISM, FRAGA IRIBARNE, FOR DRAFTING OF 1966 PRESS LAW AND WHO HAS BEEN LOYAL TO THE CORE TO FRANCO -- HE WAS MEMBER OF COUNCIL OF REALM BEFORE BECOMING MINISTER -- SHOULD HAVE BEEN REMOVED.

OTHER OBSERVERS POINT OUT THAT ARIAS HIMSELF, IN HIS FIRST PUBLIC SPEECH FEB 12, 1974, STRESSED IMPORTANCE OF PUBLIC INFORMATION AS BASIS FOR EXPANSION OF POLITICAL

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PARTICIPATION AND THAT CABANILLAS' REMOVAL REPRESENTED

A STEP BACK FROM EARLIER STANCE. IMPRESSION GENERATED BY NEWS COVERAGE IS THAT CABANILLAS WAS MOST EFFECTIVE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND TOURISM SINCE MINISTRY WAS SET UP DECADE AGO.

2. OFFICIALS IN MINISTRIES OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND FINANCE HAVE CONFIRMED TO EMBOFFS THAT BARRERA DE IRIMO RESIGNED IN ACT OF SOLIDARITY WITH CABANILLAS. FINANCE MINISTRY OFFICIALS ARE REPORTEDLY GLOOMY ABOUT FUTURE, PARTICULARLY CONSIDERING THAT GOVT'S LATEST STABILIZATION AND ANTI-INFLATION PROGRAM WAS ONLY ANNOUNCED BY BARRERA FIVE DAYS AGO. MADRID STOCK MARKET DECLINED OCT 30 IN MOVEMENT DESCRIBED BY "YA" (CATHOLIC) AS DIRECTLY RELATED TO CABINET CRISIS.

3. DIRGEN OF POPULAR CULTURE IN MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND TOURISM, RICARDO DE LA CIERVA, HAS RESIGNED IN PROTEST AGAINST REMOVAL OF CABANILLAS, DE LA CIERVA IS FIRST TOP ECHELON OFFICIAL TO STATE PUBLICLY HIS DISAPPROVAL OF ARIAS' DECISION. IT IS EXPECTED THAT OTHER TOP OFFICIALS IN MINISTRIES OF INFORMATION AND TOURISM AND FINANCE WILL BE REPLACED OR WILL RESIGN FOLLOWING OATH-TAKING OF NEW MINISTERS. HIGH ECHELON OFFICIALS SUCH AS MARCELINO OREJA, SUBSECRETARY IN MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND TOURISM, WHO HAVE BEEN ASSOCIATED WITH LIBERAL-INSPIRED GROUP KNOWN AS "TACITO" PROBABLY WILL RESIGN OR IN ANY CASE WILL BE REPLACED BY MEN IN NEW MINISTER'S TEAM IN USUAL MANNER. "TACITO", WHICH INCLUDES ABOUT 40 LEADING OFFICIALS AND POLITICIANS AND PUBLISHED PROGRAMMATIC ARTICLE ON WEEKLY BASIS IN "YA", ISSUED STATEMENT OCT 30 OF SOLIDARITY WITH CABANILLAS AND DISAPPOINTMENT WITH REVERSE COURSE ON ANNOUNCED GOVT PATH OF LIBERALIZATION.

4. IN SPEECH AND BRIEF INTERVIEW IN BURGOS OCT 30 ARIAS STATED THAT "MINISTERIAL CHANGES HAD NO TRANSCENDENTAL IMPORTANCE." HE REITERATED HIS PLEDGE TO CONTINUE WITH PROCESS OF "POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT" AND INCREASED "SOCIAL JUSTICE" FOR SPANIARDS.

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5. COMMENT: ARIAS' EFFORT TO SALVAGE IMAGE OF HIS SUPPORT FOR GRADUAL LIBERALIZATION BY HIS BURGOS STATEMENT MAY HAVE FALLEN ON DEAF EARS. MEDIA AND POLITICAL OBSERVERS HAVE COMMENTED THAT SPEECH OCT 29 BY LABADIE IN PRESENCE OF FRANCO AND JUAN CARLOS AT 41ST ANNIVERSARY OF THE FALANGE WAS TRANSCENDENTAL IN IMPORTANCE INASMUCH AS IT REPRESENTED IN EFFECT THE IDEOLOGICAL JUSTIFICATION FOR THE MINISTERIAL CHANGES TAKEN THE SAME DAY. LABADIE UNDER-

SCORED ALLEGIANCE OF SPANIARDS TO FUNDAMENTAL LAWS, CONTINUITY OF SYSTEM CONSTITUTED BY FRANCO, AND WARNED AGAINST SUBVERSION FROM DISRUPTIVE FORCES WHICH, UNDER GUISE OF LIBERAL GOALS, AIMED AT OVERTURNING SYSTEM WHICH HAD GIVEN SPANIARDS UNPRECEDENTED PROSPERITY AND PRIDE IN THEIR NATIONAL DESTINY. SPEECH HAS BEEN VIEWED AS MAJOR RIGHT WING CHALLENGE TO ARIAS AND LIBERALS AND, COUPLED WITH MINISTERIAL CHANGES, REAFFIRMATION OF DETERMINATION TO BLUNT ARIAS' PROGRAM OF LIBERLIZATION.

6. IT IS TO BE NOTED THAT, AT CEREMONY AT WHICH NEW MINISTERS WERE SWORN IN, BOTH OUTGOING MINISTERS WERE PRESENT AND BARRERA, SPEAKING ON BEHALF OF BOTH, EXPRESSED GRATITUDE TO ARIAS FOR HIS CONFIDENCE AND PLEDGED ADHERENCE TO ARIAS' WORK AND TO THE "HIGH AUTHORITIES WHICH EMBODY THE PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE OF SPAIN." IN HIS CONCLUDING REMARKS AT CEREMONY, ARIAS THANKED BARRERA AND CABANILLAS FOR THEIR WORK, PRAISED THEIR TALENTS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND EXPRESSED REGRET AT THEIR DEPARTURE, ALSO REAFFIRMING THE VALIDITY OF THE PROGRAM HE ANNOUNCED ON 12 FEB. THE WHOLE AFFAIR WAS DESIGNED TO PRESENT A FRONT OF HARMONY AND SOLIDARITY RATHER THAN ONE OF CRISIS AND DISSENSION WITHIN THE GOVERNMENT.
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